


BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 97-239-C - ORDER NO. 2002-307

APRIL 22, 2002

IN RE: Proceeding to Establish Guidelines for an
Intrastate Universal Service Fund.

) ORDER GRANTING
) REQUESTS TO EXTEND
) DEADLINE FOR FILING
) TARIFFS ASSOCIATED
) WITH THE STATE
) UNIVERSAL SERVICE
) FUND



This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina ("Commission") on the request of the South Carolina Telephone Coalition ("SCTC") and Alltel Communications, Inc. ("Alltel") (collectively the "Companies") for an extension of time in which to file tariffs associated with the State Universal Service Fund as set out in Commission Order No. 2001-996, dated October 10, 2001, requiring the Companies to file their first tariffs associated with the South Carolina Universal Service Fund (USF) no later than April 1, 2002.

Commission Order No. 2001-996 sets out the guidelines and administrative procedures for the USF, and provides that after implementation of the first step of the Initial Phase of implementation of the USF, but no later than April 1, 2002, the ILECs may file tariffs to reduce other rates providing implicit support. Such filings will be considered by the Commission and a decision rendered by September 1, 2002, for inclusion in the state USF effective October 1, 2002.

By its counsel's letter of March 22, 2002, the SCTC filed with the Commission a request that the Commission extend the April 1, 2002 deadline as set forth in Order No. 2001-996 to file its tariffs associated with the USF. SCTC respectfully requests that an extension be granted to all participating companies of the SCTC until June 1, 2002, to file the companies' related tariffs and accompanying cost data. Thus, the SCTC states that any company that wishes to file a tariff and cost data for the second step of the first phase of State USF implementation, that filing would be made not later than June 1, 2002.

The SCTC further provides that there has been a great deal of federal regulatory activity within the past six months that is impacting rural telephone companies. The SCTC's companies have been devoting significant amounts of staff resources in implementing the FCC's recent MAG order, and in assessing the impact the order and various open federal rulemaking proceedings will have on the SCTC's companies' State universal service funding requirements. Although all of these issues will not be resolved by June 1, 2002, the SCTC believes that additional time is necessary for the companies to identify and quantify the state rates that will be most impacted by the federal action and are most important to be addressed by the companies in the state filing. The SCTC adds further that granting an extension would not impair the Commission's ability to implement additional USF funding by October 1, 2002, if such additional funding is requested.

By its counsel's letter of March 26, 2002, Alltel filed with the Commission a request for an extension of time in which to file its tariffs associated with the USF and accompanying cost data until June 1, 2002. In its request, Alltel briefly describes the

request of the SCTC, as discussed herein above, and states that Alltel respectfully requests the same extension. To the extent Alltel wishes to file a tariff and cost data for the second step of the first phase of the State USF implementation, Alltel states that the filing would be made not later than June 1, 2002. Alltel further reiterates the SCTC's belief that granting an extension will not significantly impair the Commission's ability to implement additional USF funding, to the extent any such additional funding is requested, by October 1, 2002.

The Commission finds and concludes that the SCTC's request and Alltel's request for an extension of time to file the Companies' tariffs associated with the USF should be granted.


IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. The initial deadline of April 1, 2002, as set forth in Commission Order No. 2001-996, shall be extended to June 1, 2002, for the companies of the South Carolina Telephone Coalition and Alltel Communications, Inc. to file their tariffs associated with the South Carolina Universal Service Fund.

2. This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further Order of the Commission.


Chairman

ATTEST:


Executive Director
(SEAL)